

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

KETCHIKAN, ALASKA

October 2nd, 1934.

Rev. J.M. Somerndike, D.D.
Secretary, Presbyterian Board,
National Missions, 156 Fifth Ave.
New York City:

My dear Dr. Somerndike:-

Your letter yesterday with the enclosed check was very much appreciated. I had planned by borrowing the money from the bank to meet the extra expenses. I did not ask for financial help from the Board because of the lack of funds these hard times but as you have sent it you may rest assured it will help greatly in lifting quite a load.

I have been somewhat troubled the last few years as to just how I could care for Mrs. Beck for the burdens she has carried all these years were beginning to overcome her strength. Now she is young and strong again and the problems are working out.

Again thanking you all for this much needed assistance I am

Most sincerely yours

George J. Beck

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
KETCHIKAN, ALASKA

October 12th, 1934

Rev. James M. Somerndike, D.D.
Secretary, Presbyterian Board,
National Missions, 156 Fifth Ave.
New York City.

Dear Dr. Somerndike:-

Have located August check. Very sorry if
I caused you trouble in looking it up. One of my
checks some time ago was returned to you without my
endorsement. In some way the check got into the
banks Post office box and as they do all my work they
simply placed it to my credit and sent it back to you.
I don't know what happened this time I may have signed it
and then forgotten all about it. I was troubled
about many things this August but I have things well in
hand now.

Very sincerely yours

Geo. J. Beck.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

KETCHIKAN, ALASKA

October 15th, 1934.

Rev. James M. Somerndike, D.D.
Secretary, Presbyterian Board,
National Missions, 156 Fifth ave.
New York City.

Dear Dr. Somerndike:-

The summer slump in church attendance caused by the fishing rush that must be taken care of in a few short months, short because according to regulation several days each week are closed to fishing, has not given any rest to your missionary for when the people do not attend church it is much harder to keep them out of mischief. All kinds of troubles must be settled from murder to hurt feelings and for this reason I have been on the job all summer.

The poor Indian is surely going through a test now that nothing but the Grace of God can keep him from utter failure. The breaking down of his self respect caused by lack of employment and being forced to accept relief from the Government and other organizations has been bad and now that strong drink is almost as free as water and in the hands of the worst element of white men and women he surely is in a dangerous position.

However their faith in God is still strong and I see signs of a great return to spiritual things. I am not discouraged and feel there are great hopes for the people this winter.

Very sincerely yours

Geo. J. Beck

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

KETCHIKAN, ALASKA

November 27th, 1934.

Rev. James M. Somerndike, D.D.
 Secretary, Presbyterian Board,
 National Missions, 156 Fifth Ave.
 New York City.

Dear Rev. Somerndike:-

Taking it altogether your missionary at Ketchikan this fall has been almost ready to admit discouragement. He has never done so before because of the grace of God and a loving wife who though never very strong in body was so spiritually filled and had such a great love for the cause of Christ that many times she carried us both over conditions that were hard enough to break the strongest. She has gone home.

Then the people of these United States turned loose upon us such a flood of strong drink that though many kept themselves clean the awfulness of the abandonment of some who gave into the very depth of degradation cast a deadening influence upon the whole church.

However the grace of God is sufficient, ^{and} your missionary has not given up. The tide has turned. One after another have gone to work and last Sunday was an inspiration.

The morning service was well attended (as a rule we do not have many out, the main service of the day is in the evening) The Sunday school at noon was well attended, the spirit at Saxmon was good. The Christian Endeavor held a wonderful meeting at three, and at seven thirty the church was filled. A fine choir sang from their hearts and while the offering was taken some of the elders formed a quartet and sang. After the sermon the new officers of the C.E. were installed and eighteen new members were received into church membership. Eleven on confession of Faith, upstanding young men and women who as far as I know have not touched tobacco or strong drink this fall. All the organizations of the church are taking on new life.

We may be a bit late with the new blanks but are making good progress and am much encouraged with the way the members are helping. The blanks arrived just at a time when the Alaska Native Brotherhood and the missionary expedition from Sitka came. Every minute is filled both day and night.

Sincerely yours

George J. Beck

Revival at Ketchikan Entails New Recruits.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

KETCHIKAN, ALASKA

May 16th, 1935

Rev. J.M.Somerndike, D.D.
Secretary, Presbyterian Board,
National Missions, 156 Five Ave,
New York City.

My dear Dr. Somerndike:-

As the spring opens up there is always a more hopeful feeling in the air. Our people will always be fishermen so when the herring and then the salmon begin to come in everybody goes to work. Work is the one thing needful and it changes the whole atmosphere. So many people have given up trying for themselves and just rely on relief work.

My own work keeps just about the same the only difference being when we have lots of people it is not so hard to talk to them, the inspiration of numbers means much.

A number of our church members are trying their luck trolling, Others are out catching and drying fish while others are working hard to get their seineboats in shape for the latter part of next month when the canneries begin their work.

We are much interested in this plan of the government in regard to the settlement of the Matanuska valley. I believe it will succeed and I still feel if I could have gotten just a little backing in my venture when times were not so hard and the effort was made to start the people farming in southeastern Alaska many of them would have been well off now. It is not too late to start again now. I could not get the three thousand asked for while now the government is spending hundreds of thousands.

The interest keeps up well and our Wednesday evening meeting is the best of the week.

The Salvation Army Hall has been moved from in front of our church but the residence part and the front porch is still on the blocks. The FERA workers were moving it but when the funds gave out they left it up in the air and the Salvation Army is waiting to see what will happen next.

Sincerely yours

Geo. J. Beck

NATIONAL MISSIONS
REV. RUSSELL F. ANDERSON CH.
WRANGELL, ALASKA
FOREIGN MISSIONS
REV. H. W. GREIG, CH.
SITKA, ALASKA
PENSIONS
() CH.
AND STATED CLERK

PRESBYTERY OF ALASKA

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
REV. C. WARREN GRIFFITHS, CH.
SKAGWAY, ALASKA

STATED CLERK
REV. DAVID WAGGONER
BOX 1421
JUNEAU, ALASKA

Box 275
Wrangell
Oct 31st, 1935

Dr. J. M. Somerndike
Board National Missions
156 Fifth Ave., New York

Dear Dr. Somerndike:

Since Rev. George J. Beck is turning the Ketchikan Church work over to Rev. Verne J. Swanson, December first; and taking his furlough beginning with said date the Board of National Missions should pay him his transportation at once.

Because I do not know which steamer Mr. Beck expects to use I do not know the amount of his fare. Therefore I am sending this letter to Mr. Beck and requesting that he note hereon the cost of the fare and any other costs which he may wish to bring to your attention.

Sincerely,

Russell F. Anderson

Dont you think Dr. Somerndike that ~~as~~ I am the only Presbyterian Missionary who ever really put in forty years of actual service in the field in Alaska. Has given up many vacations and travel money when due and according to general report has held successfully nearly all the different positions in the church and school for less salary than others were paid for the same work that I rate a little more than just the twenty eight dollars it takes to get me to Seattle.

Very sincerely yours

George J. Beck

Nov.
15th
1935

Rev. George J. Beck,
Ketchikan, Alaska

Dear Mr. Beck:

Replying to your letter, I am writing to say that we are sending you a check for \$28 to cover your trip to Seattle. In addition we are prepared to pay your salary for four months from December 1st, 1935, to April 1st, 1936. If you would like to have a check covering your salary for the entire four months, I shall be glad to send it.

Feeling that you may need some additional money, I am sending you a check covering your salary for December in advance of the usual date of this remittance. Any other expenses in connection with your trip to the States will be refunded upon presentation of your accounts.

With every good wish, I am

Faithfully yours,

JMS:BH

*check for \$138.00
sent 11/15/35
(See memo 11/28/35 Ely)*

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

KETCHIKAN, ALASKA

November 21st, 1935.

Rev. J.M. Somerndike, D.D.
Secretary, Presbyterian Board,
National Missions, 156 Fifth Ave,
New York City.

My dear Rev. Somerndike:-

October this year has been the same as all the past Octobers have been. Weddings and funerals. Baptisms and all the other activities of the church. As the months go by they may differ a bit in detail but on the whole Christian work goes on as it did in the beginning and ever will go on until that great day when the end will come to this reign of sin.

Great changes take place, men come and go but the word of our Lord shall stand forever.

This flood of strong drink is weeding out the weak members of the Native race but so many of the people are standing against it and I believe are stronger for the battle they are fighting.

Our congregations are growing larger. Hunting, fishing and other camping parties have kept the attendance small for this month. However in many ways I have been able to preach Christ to a very much larger group of people than the actual report shows. Hoping that I will be able to report in person soon I am

Sincerely yours

Geo. J. Beck